

time we used the reconciliation process, we got ObamaCare. That's how they passed ObamaCare. Mr. Speaker, they used the reconciliation process to pass ObamaCare; and I have a feeling that what we're going to get out of this Gang of Six is a bill that they're going to ask us to vote for before we know what's in it.

□ 1120

Thirdly, if through this reconciliation process they come out with the cuts that are necessary to bring them within the amount that they allocate that we need to cut and save, then if that reconciliation process produces a supermajority in the Senate, only after they produce a supermajority of votes in the Senate will they move to shoring up our Social Security system.

What they should be doing is working on getting a supermajority so we can pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. What is so wrong with giving the American people the opportunity to speak, to say, Congress, you have been out of control. You need to balance your books like all of the American families in this country do.

In closing, I want to warn our Members in this Chamber that the Gang of Six proposal cedes the power of the House to the Senate. Now, I came here to uphold that Constitution. The power of the purse, article I, section 7, clause 1, gives the power of the purse to this House. Regardless of whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, you should care about that. Those committees in the Senate should not be dealing with our tax laws or they should only deal with them after we have had a chance to send it to them.

This is what the American people demand. They demand that our Constitution work. And for it to work, revenue and spending starts here in the House. Let's not cede the power of the House over to the Senate.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2055. An act making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2055) "An Act making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes" and requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. JOHNSON (SD), Mr. INOUE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED (RI), Mr. NELSON (NE), Mr. PRYOR, Mr. TESTER, Mr. LEAHY, Mr.

KIRK, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. COATS, and Mr. COCHRAN to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

IMPACT OF CUTS ON POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) for 2 minutes.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, it is very easy for some Members of Congress to blindly advocate across-the-board cuts to our investments in people. But I join those today to ask my colleagues to open their eyes to what these cuts really mean. They aren't abstract numbers. For the many people living in poverty, they mean lives irreparably damaged and critical opportunities lost.

My home State, the great Hoosier State of Indiana, suffers from an average unemployment rate of 10 percent. Among veterans, that number is higher. And for wounded vets and others with physical limitations, the numbers are staggeringly higher.

As a result of these economic times, Mr. Speaker, more families live in poverty and rely critically on your and my help. Valuable health care, education, housing, and job-training programs are necessary to provide them with the tools for survival.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, when most of our communities are struggling to recover, we must not turn our backs on the people who are trying to overcome extreme poverty.

I ask my colleagues to remember these vulnerable Americans. They're not burdens. They're our children, our working mothers, our police officers, our firefighters, our neighbors, our vets. They are our fellow Americans.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT NATHAN BEYERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice and laid down his life for our freedoms, United States Army Sergeant Nathan Ryan Beyers.

Sergeant Beyers, a 2006 graduate of Thunder Ridge High School in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, volunteered to serve in the Idaho Army National Guard. In the Army, he served with the 145th Brigade Support Battalion of the 116th Cavalry Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

He deployed with his unit in support of Operation New Dawn in Iraq. On July 7, 2011, he gave his life in the line of duty on a convoy security mission.

Nathan is remembered not only for his heroics on the battlefield, but for the tremendous impact he had on his family, friends, and community.

He was absolutely devoted to his family and his fellow soldiers. As his

wife recalls, Nathan was proud of his job and serving our country. He died doing something he loved and was such a brave person.

Sergeant Nathan Ryan Beyers personifies the honor and selflessness of service as a citizen soldier. His bravery and dedication to duty will not be forgotten. As a Marine Corps combat veteran, my deepest sympathies go out to his family, his fellow soldiers, and all who knew him.

OUT OF POVERTY CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) for 2 minutes.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, let me just sort of set the record straight and explain things.

When President Obama came into office, we were in debt, and we were also involved in two wars. And when President Clinton left office, there was a surplus. So we need to make certain that we keep our facts in line.

So I stand here this morning with the Out of Poverty Caucus to voice my opposition to the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act passed by this body yesterday.

Furthermore, I'm very disturbed that many of the policies being promoted by some of my colleagues are unjust and they are just plain wrong. Cutting back on Medicare and Social Security is unfair to the senior citizens who have worked hard all of their lives and should not have to worry at this point whether they can afford to go to the doctor or buy the medicine that they need.

Let me add, I am baffled at times by the fact that many of my colleagues refuse to even consider how unjust their proposals are. Yes, we must reduce our debt burden. I agree with that. But it is unjust to balance the budget on the backs of the poor and most vulnerable citizens in our Nation.

The wealthy must join in the sacrifice. They must be included. According to a report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, two-thirds of the income gains in the United States from 2002 to 2007 went to the top 1 percent of the income earners. Many of my colleagues are saying give them more tax breaks. They're not even asking for more. But they're saying give them more.

Many of the Members of this body believe it's all right to balance the budget by taking food out of the mouths of babies, by cutting WIC programs. Imagine how terrible it must be for a mother or father to send their kid to bed hungry at night.

That is why I stand for the Out of Poverty Caucus and say enough is enough.

SLASHING MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) for 3 minutes.